

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7128
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 778

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: BOTHA COMMENT ON TROOP WITHDRAWAL ISSUE

REF: CAPE TOWN 773,

1. DURING APRIL 17 CONVERSATION WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR
SIR DAVID SCOTT ON NEW SECURITY PROCLAMATION BY THE A-G
(REFTEL), FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA ALSO DISCUSSED THE TIMING
OF THE SAG TROOP WITHDRAWAL FOLLOWING CERTIFICATION OF THE
ELECTIONS. ACCORDING TO SCOTT, BOTHA EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE
OF THE WESTERN POWERS PROVIDING SOME GUARANTEE TO THE PEOPLE OF
SOUTH WEST AFRICA ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE TERRITORY DURING THE
TRANSITION PERIOD. IF THIS CANNOT BE GIVEN, BOTHA SAID,
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IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE SAG TO ANNOUNCE UNILATERALLY
THAT IF REQUESTED BY THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO
RETAIN ITS TROOPS IN THE TERRITORY UNTIL INDEPENDENCE,
THE SAG WOULD BE WILLING TO COMPLY. SCOTT TOLD US HE
CAUTIONED AGAINST SUCH A STEP BUT ONLY MODERATELY SINCE
IT WAS NOT THE TIME OR PLACE TO TAKE STRONG ISSUE
WITH THE IDEA, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE FIVE

ARE PRESENTLY CONSIDERING HOW THE ASSURANCES BOTHA SEEKS MIGHT BE PROVIDED. ACCORDING TO SCOTT, BOTHA IS NOT ON THE VERGE OF MAKING SUCH A STATEMENT AND, IF IT IS EVENTUALLY MADE, IT WILL BE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SAG DECISION ON THE WESTERN PROPOSAL.

2. COMMENT: BOTHA IS SURELY AWARE OF THE DAMAGING EFFECT SUCH A STATEMENT COULD HAVE, AND HIS SUGGESTING THIS COURSE OF ACTION COULD BE NO MORE THAN A TACTIC TO WIN THE WESTERN ASSURANCE HE WANTS. BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THE FIVE WILL WANT TO MAKE CLEAR TO HIM AT AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY THAT SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD BE VIEWED AS IN DIRECT CONTRAVENTION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL AND, THEREFORE, HARMFUL AND UNACCEPTABLE.

3. ACCORDING TO SIR DAVID, BOTHA ALSO RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE TIMING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S REPLY TO THE PROPOSAL IN RELATION TO SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF THE MATTER. HE INFORMED SIR DAVID THAT SOUTH AFRICA BELIEVED CONSIDERATION BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD GO AHEAD WITHOUT WAITING FOR A RESPONSE FROM THE SAG. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR, APRIL 18, BOTHA'S AIDE, NEIL VAN HEERDEN, SAID THAT THE EFFECT OF SAG ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL BEFORE OR DURING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY GENERAL SESSION COULD BE ARGUED EITHER WAY. VAN HEERDEN SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY FELT SOUTH AFRICA

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SHOULD MAKE ITS DECISION ON THE BASIS OF THE MERITS OF THE PROPOSAL AND PROCEED TO MAKE ITS ANNOUNCEMENT WITHOUT REGARD TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION.

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